

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 R

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TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 253428

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PINT, CS

SUBJECT: INOCENTE ALVAREZ

REFS: A) SAN JOSE 4303, B) SAN JOSE 4190

1. DEPARTMENT IS PROCEEDING TO SET UP ALVAREZ MEETING. HOWEVER, WE ARE INCREASINGLY PUZZLED BY THE SERIES OF CONFLICTING PERCEPTIONS WE ARE RECEIVING IN THIS CASE AND SOLICIT EMBASSY'S COUNSEL IN ATTEMPTING TO FIGURE OUT JUST WHAT IS GOING ON. OVER TIME WE HAD FORMED THE TENTATIVE IMPRESSION THAT PEPE FIGUERES WAS ATTEMPTING TO PROTECT VESCO AND THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER, WHILE NOT WISHING TO BE FORCED INTO A CONFRONTATION WITH DON PEPE ON THIS ISSUE, WAS BEING SUBJECTED TO INCREASING POLITICAL EMBARRASSMENT BY VESCO'S CONTINUED PRESENCE IN COSTA RICA. (THIS LAST IS TEMPERED, OF COURSE, BY INFORMATION INDICATING THAT ODUBER HIMSELF MAY HAVE SOME BUSINESS CONNECTIONS WITH VESCO.) IF THE ABOVE IS CORRECT IT SEEMS UNUSUAL THAT ALVAREZ, BY HIS OWN TESTIMONY, HAS BEEN ABLE TO ;CLEAR; HIS PROPOSED SESSION WITH THE SEC WITH PEPE AND WITH GONZALO FACIO (WHO WE WOULD HAVE

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SUPPOSED TO BE MORE OR LESS ON PEPE'S SIDE ON THIS ISSUE)

BUT ANTICIPATES PROBLEMS WITH ODUBER. (WE ALSO FIND IT ODD THAT PEPE GOES ALONG BUT JOSE MARTI DOES NOT.) ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION THAT OCCURS TO US IS THAT WE REALLY ARE ABOUT TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME ESSENTIALLY INTRA-COSTA RICAN MANEUVERING BETWEEN DON PEPE AND DANIEL.

BUT IF SO, TO WHAT END?

2. ALSO SOMEWHAT TROUBLING HAS BEEN THE CHANGE OVER/ TIME FROM AN AUGUST SIGNAL BY TAREFA, PRESUMABLY ON BEHALF OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, OF INTEREST IN MEETING WITH THE SEC TO APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST, FOLLOWED BY A RESUMPTION OF INTEREST BY ALVAREZ, ON OCTOBER 31. WHAT FACTORS WERE AT PLAY TO SO ALTER ALVAREZ'S THINKING.

3. ALVAREZ'S REASONS FOR MEETING WITH THE SEC IN REF A ARE NOT VERY CONVINCING. SHOULD HE STAY IN SAN JOSE IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT TYPE OF PROTECTION THE US GOVERNMENT COULD OFFER HIM. ALVAREZ MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING SOME TYPE OF IMMUNITY BUT APART FROM THAT WE WONDER WHAT OTHER ADVANTAGES ALVAREZ SEES IN THE MEETING FOR HIMSELF, OR FOR OTHERS. IT JUST MIGHT BE THAT THE LIQUIDATORS WORKING IN COSTA RICA, OR VARIOUS SEC INSPIRED ACTIONS ELSEWHERE, ARE THREATENING HIM IN WAYS WE DO NOT PRESENTLY APPRECIATE.

4. OPERATIONALLY WE HAVE ASSUMED THAT ALVAREZ MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE ABOUT HIS DISCUSSION AND WE HAD DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTED TO LIMIT NUMBERS OF USG PARTICIPANTS. IS THIS A REAL CONCERN? KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BRIEFING MATERIALS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE253428
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JGSULLIVAN:TK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740331-0407
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741136/aaaabepy.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: A) SAN JOSE 4303, B) SAN JOSE 4190
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <11 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INOCENTE ALVAREZ
TAGS: PINT, CS, US, (VESCO, ROBERT), (ALVAREZ, INOCENTE)
To: SAN JOSE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005